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ABSTRACT

Characteristics of faculty members and institutions were examined that would be predictive of faculty members' willingness to participate in faculty development activities. Of 325 institutions surveyed, 70 provided institutional data and a list of full-time faculty members. Of the 1,000 faculty members surveyed, usable responses were received from 585. A questionnaire investigated the orientation of faculty members toward their profession and organization for which they worked, the way in which Faculty members spend their time, and demographic characteristics of faculty members. None of the variables studied were predictive of faculty members' willingness to participate in faculty development activities. Among the tentative conclusions are that faculty members are most willing to participate in faculty development activities related to their professional career; teaching activities are second, and other institutional activities are least favored. Four recommendations are offered. (SW)

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# INDICATORS OF COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY FACULTY MEMBERS' WILLINGNESS TO PARTICIPATE IN FACULTY DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

The purpose of this study was to identify characteristics of faculty members and institutions which would be predictive of faculty members' willingness to participate in faculty development activities.

A review of literature concerning the topics of faculty development programs, faculty role, and the relationship of professionals to the organizations in which they are employed indicated that willingness of faculty members to participate in activities of faculty development programs is a problem, but one that has not yet been researched. Furthermore, the literature indicated that viewing faculty members as professionals involved in multi-dimensional organizational roles would be a legitimate approach for this study.

Seven hypotheses were formulated for the research. Orientation of faculty members toward their profession and toward the organization in which they were employed, the way in which faculty members spent their time, demographic characteristics of faculty members, and characteristics of the institutions in which they were employed served as independent variables in the hypotheses.

From a list of higher education institutions classified as doctoral, comprehensive, and general baccalaureate, 325 institutions were selected. Chief academic officers from these institutions were requested to provide institutional data and a list of full-time faculty members. From the responses received from this inquiry, a set of 70 institutions was established, proportionately divided among the doctoral, comprehensive, and general baccalaureate classifications and type of control and representing 33 states. A proportional, random sample of one thousand faculty members was selected from the lists provided by the 70

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institutions. A questionnaire consisting of three parts - general information, professional and organizational orientation scales developed by Richard Hall, and faculty development activities - was sent to these faculty members.

The response rate was 67.4 percent. Of the returned questionnaires, 585 (58.5 percent) were adequate for analysis. The respondents were representative of the sample and the population on the following characteristics: type of institution in which they were employed, sex, and rank.

The relationships hypothesized were investigated by using Kendall's tau or the contingency coefficient. Although statistically significant results were obtained in most of the tests of hypotheses, this was due primarily to the large size of the sample. The relationships which were found to exist were very small. None of the variables studied proved to be even moderately predictive of faculty members' willingness to participate in faculty development activities. Certain tentative statements can be made concerning the results:

1. Faculty members are most willing to participate in faculty development activities related to professional career; teaching activities are second, with other institutional activities those in which faculty members are least willing to participate.
2. Willingness of faculty members to participate in professional career faculty development activities is slightly higher among faculty members who are oriented toward their professional organization, hold degrees in social science or education, hold doctoral degrees, and spend more time in research and publishing.
3. Willingness of faculty members to participate in faculty development activities related to teaching is slightly higher among faculty members who hold degrees in education, physical education, or home economics, are employed in institutions other than leading research PhD institutions, and are employed in institutions

where teaching is the first priority for hiring, promoting, and awarding tenure.

4. Willingness of faculty members to participate in faculty development activities related to other organizational activities is slightly higher among faculty members who hold degrees in education, physical education, or home economics, are employed in institutions other than leading research PhD institutions, and are employed in institutions where research and publishing are not the first priority for hiring, promoting, and awarding tenure.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. If faculty members' actions follow from their stated willingness to participate in faculty development activities, the recent initiation of such programs on campuses should be successful. Programs designed to include activities related to professional career as well as teaching-related activities should engender wider participation than those including only teaching-related activities. If professional career development activities are coordinated by a unit other than the faculty development unit, it may be advantageous to broaden the scope of the faculty development unit so that it includes all development activities, including those related to professional career. This may be difficult to accomplish in institutions where professional career development has traditionally been a departmental responsibility; however, in institutions where funds for such activities are administered by a central office, the transfer of administration to the faculty development unit could increase the acceptance of the other activities of the unit.

2. Academic administrators and directors of faculty development programs should be aware of the disciplines in which faculty members hold their degrees. This is the only individual characteristic which is consistently predictive of willingness to participate in all three types of faculty development activities. The patterns of willingness described above have implications for the structuring of programs. If programs have a diversity of activities they are more likely to elicit participation from faculty members in a broad range of disciplines. It is possible that programs could become dominated by faculty in education, physical education, and home economics if their focus is only on teaching-related activities, thus creating an impression among faculty in other disciplines that faculty development applies only to persons in these applied disciplines.

3. How faculty members spend their time does not appear to predict their willingness to participate in faculty development activities, with one exception: the proportion of time spent in research and publishing is slightly predictive of willingness to participate in professional career activities. This indicates that in institutions where faculty participate in various types of activities, faculty development programs can be designed to elicit participation from all types of faculty. For example, programs designed only for those teaching undergraduates may be detrimental to wider faculty participation. The data indicate, in fact, that those who spend a greater proportion of their time teaching graduates are slightly more willing to participate in teaching-related development activities than are those who spend more time teaching undergraduates. It would be advisable, then, to design teaching-related development activities for all levels of teaching, not just undergraduate.

4. The lack of association between the orientation of faculty members toward their profession and the employing organization and willingness to participate in faculty development activities has several implications. Apparently, professional/organizational tension does not exist for faculty members. Furthermore, faculty development activities are not viewed as organizationally-imposed activities, if the non-existent or low relationships between willingness and characteristics such as autonomy and hierarchy of authority are valid. A reason for these trends may be the current financial crisis in higher education. Because of an oversupply of persons trained for entry into the academic profession, those who hold organizational positions tend to view their employing institution differently than they might have a decade ago when the job situation was reversed. They are more likely to recognize their dependence upon the organization for the continuation of their academic career and perhaps be more tolerant of its intrusion into their professional lives. Whatever the reason, this trend indicates that faculty development programs should have no difficulty in being accepted as legitimate organizational units.